

INL Intelligence

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A high-level monthly briefing on operations and activities at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory
Work at the lab advances the Department's strategic goals in the areas of energy, environment, defense and science.

■ Agreement Reached to Evaluate Medical Isotope Production in Idaho

IsoRay Medical, Inc. of Richland, Wash., Idaho National Laboratory and the Pocatello Development Authority this month announced their commitment to invest \$400,000 to test whether a key medical isotope could be efficiently produced in INL's Advanced Test Reactor. IsoRay is hoping to increase the availability of Cesium-131, which has been approved for use in treating prostate cancer and other malignant tumors. IsoRay Medical is the world's only manufacturer and distributor of brachytherapy seeds containing the Cesium-131 isotope. The tests will be conducted in the Advanced Test Reactor during 2006. The overall program begins immediately and will involve design, analysis and fabrication of a capsule that will contain barium carbonate, which will be irradiated during the test and then shipped to IsoRay for final analysis.

■ INL Researchers Complete Vulnerability Studies

More than 40 researchers at the National SCADA Test Bed, jointly operated by INL and Sandia National Laboratories, spent much of the past year performing cyber vulnerability assessments on and providing security recommendations for the computer-based operating units that control critical infrastructures such as the electric power grid and oil and gas refineries. Recommendations provided to U.S. and global equipment manufacturers include increased firewall and password use, as well as rewriting portions of the operating systems' code. The National SCADA Test Bed program provides a direct interface between the national laboratories and the private utility industry. In November, Idaho's Congressional delegation secured additional funding to allow the program to continue in 2006.

■ Nuclear Utility Advisory Board Meets in Idaho

Representatives from the nuclear utility industry are continuing to focus on building laboratory-industry partnerships with Idaho National Laboratory – as demonstrated during a recent meeting of the INL Utility Advisory Board in Idaho Falls. The advisory board was formed in March to advise the laboratory on direction and focus of its nuclear energy priorities. The priorities identified by the board relate to continued safe operation of the nation's 103 nuclear power plants, implementation of the Nuclear Power 2010 initiative for building new nuclear power plants in the United States, and technologies associated with next-generation nuclear power plants. The board consists of senior executives from American Electric Power, Constellation Energy Corp., Dominion Energy, Duke Energy, Entergy Corp., Exelon Corp., Nuclear Management Co., Omaha Public Power District, Southern California Edison and the Electric Power Research Institute, as well as a former senior executive of PSEG Nuclear.

■ INL Innovators Gain Special Recognition

Seven more researchers were inducted into INL's Inventors' Hall of Fame in ceremonies held earlier this month. In total, the 39 scientists and engineers in the laboratory's Hall of Fame have amassed more than 230 inventions. "The inventors honored here represent decades of the highest quality research," said John Grossenbacher, Laboratory Director. "They set an exceptional standard for their fellow researchers at the new Idaho National Laboratory. An active program of inventorship and patenting is an important element in demonstrating technical leadership as we set the course for transforming INL into a world-leading institution."

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